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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 000719

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TAGS: [KPKO](#) [PBTS](#) [PREL](#) [ET](#) [ER](#)

SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA-ERITREA: WITHOUT TSZ THERE IS NO ALGIERS
ACCORD, FORMIN

Classified By: Ambassador Donald Yamamoto for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin told Ambassador Yamamoto in a March 11 meeting that the actions by the UN Security Council over the coming days and weeks with regard to the Ethiopia-Eritrea border conflict will dictate how Ethiopia responds. Seyoum described the UN Security Council as divided over the Ethiopia-Eritrea issue with Italy, Indonesia, Vietnam, and South Africa playing "unhelpful" roles and China being "very sensitive to sanctions." Seyoum described the South African Mission in New York as implementing its own policy on the issue, rather than having its position being directed by Pretoria. Seyoum praised support from Washington and noted that Russia, the UK, and France are playing positive roles. Seyoum stated, however, that "if there is no Temporary Security Zone (TSZ), there is no Algiers Accord." The Foreign Minister did concede that Ethiopia sees a withdrawal from the Algiers Accord as a last option, noting the United States' persistent advice that Ethiopia not pull out from the agreement. While Seyoum confirmed that Ethiopia is actively engaging UNSC members bilaterally, he reiterated that "without respect for the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and without a TSZ, there is no Algiers Accord."

¶2. (C) The Ambassador detailed current discussions among UNSC members and efforts by the USG to focus the Council on Eritrea's specific restrictions on the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) within the scope of the broader sanctity of international peacekeeping operations (PKOs) as a first step, likely through a Presidential Statement (PRST), before a second statement or resolution addressing the border situation. Ambassador noted, however, that significant elements within the UNSC do not yet support imposing sanctions against Eritrea despite its actions against UNMEE. Seyoum responded by saying "the Security Council's decisions in the coming weeks will determine Ethiopia's developments on the ground." Seyoum stressed that if Eritrea is allowed to impose its own decisions on UNMEE and engage in rogue behavior, it would establish a negative precedent with broad and lasting ramifications for future PKOs and undercut the authority of the UNSC. He emphasized that the message to Ethiopia is also relevant, asking rhetorically "why abide by international law if the other party gets away without ramifications for destroying a peace process?" The Ambassador concluded the discussion by encouraging Ethiopia to remain committed to the process and not to withdraw from the Algiers Accord.

